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A Lynching in the Heartland: Race and Memory in America

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tor, yet he is not given to hero worshiping, for he shows as complete a portrait as the historical record allows, warts and blemishes of character included. The backdrop of McGhee's life is a world in which post-Civil War racism is not exclusively a southern phenomenon and the "bad guys" are not always venal. Complacency, Nelson shows, often promotes bigotry as much as the bigoted act itself. In essence, Nelson's book tells us about an important man determined to confront an allegedly progressive place that resists seeing its own peculiar institution of hypocrisy; a place where blacks and whites seem to get along because they smile at each other. For these insights, this book is an important addition to our regional history.

A Lynching in the Heartland: Race and Memory in America, by James H. Madison. New York: Palgrave, 2001. xvi, 204 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$24.95 cloth.

Reviewer Michael J. Pfeifer teaches American history at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. He has published articles on lynching and criminal justice in Iowa and U.S. history.

In *A Lynching in the Heartland*, James H. Madison skillfully narrates and contextualizes the mob killing of two African American youths, Tom Shipp and Abe Smith, and the near lynching of another black youth, James Cameron, in Marion, Indiana, in August 1930. The mob's victims had allegedly murdered a young white factory worker, Claude Deeter, and raped his companion, Mary Ball. A photograph of the corpses of Shipp and Smith, surrounded by jeering and pointing whites, was widely distributed and became one of the most well-known photographs of a lynching. The photograph has often been erroneously captioned as depicting an early twentieth-century southern lynching. Yet the event that it vividly documented took place in the Midwest, in north central Indiana near the beginning of the Great Depression. Employing an array of sources that include newspapers, court records, oral history, and governmental and institutional correspondence, Madison makes a strong contribution to a growing literature that analyzes the brutal and complex phenomenon of lynching in American history.

Madison begins by effectively situating the violence in the history of Marion and Grant County. He describes violence against Native Americans during white settlement; a proud pioneer heritage still often remembered in 1930; a substantial history of lynching in postbellum Indiana, including the thwarting of the lynching of an African American man in Marion in 1885 through the aggressive action of law

enforcement; a black community—a product of nineteenth-century migration and the early twentieth-century “Great Migration”—that encountered increasing racism and segregation after 1910 or so; and the intense popularity of the racist and nativist Ku Klux Klan among Marion and Indiana whites in the 1920s.

Madison’s narrative continues by tracing the responses of the black and white communities to the lynching. He describes the courageous efforts of Flossie Bailey, the head of the local and state branches of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), to push for an investigation of the lynching against the intransigence of the governor and a number of local officials. Bailey was aided by a sympathetic state Attorney General, James Ogden, but juries acquitted two white men charged with participating in the mob. Many whites in Grant County, activated by what they viewed as a recent history of ineffectual law enforcement, argued that the killers of Smith and Shipp were a “fair mob.”

Finally, Madison pursues the strange life the tragic events of 1930 have had in the town’s memory. The lynching was remembered in particular ways by those who fought for and against the desegregation of a community swimming pool in 1954, and by local blacks and whites before, during, and after the civil rights movement. James Cameron, whose lynching by the Marion mob was narrowly averted when cooler heads prevailed, moved to Milwaukee, where in 1988 he founded the Black Holocaust Museum to preserve the memory of American racial violence. The media discovered Cameron’s story in the 1990s, and he returned to Marion for an official pardon by Indiana governor Evan Bayh in 1993.

Madison’s approach is comprehensive and fair-minded and avoids sensationalism and oversimplification. His style is rigorous yet accessible. The book is not only about a lynching but also about that event’s relationship to a town’s past and future; it is a valuable history of a particular midwestern place and the relations of blacks and whites there. Iowa experienced similar events and race relations, and students of Iowa history will learn from the book. A mob of whites killed an African American accused of theft in Dubuque in 1840; lynch mobs of whites pursued at least 14 African Americans in towns and cities across Iowa in the early twentieth century.

The monograph could be made stronger in two ways. First, Madison tells us that 41 whites and 20 blacks were lynched in Indiana from 1865 through 1903 (18). But like most historians of lynching, he fails to grasp that the lynching of whites might tell us something about the lynching of African Americans. Midwestern mobs (including mobs

that killed 24 whites in Iowa after 1873) acted out a harsh, communalistic vision of criminal justice when they sought both blacks and whites, even if the motivations differed. Madison recounts several lynchings of blacks in Indiana, but we learn nothing about the substantial number of whites who were lynched in the Hoosier State. Second, Madison is too harsh on James Cameron and his latter-day celebrity. Madison seems to think that Cameron has distorted the details of the lynching (the only documented discrepancy here is that Cameron places the by then defunct Ku Klux Klan at the scene of the lynching) and has benefited from his status as a near victim of lynching. One should hardly begrudge Cameron the fact that he avoided a fate that thousands of African Americans did not.

Quacks & Crusaders: The Fabulous Careers of John Brinkley, Norman Baker, and Harry Hoxsey, by Eric S. Juhnke. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002. xvi, 215 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$29.95 cloth.

The Bizarre Careers of John R. Brinkley, by R. Alton Lee. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2002. xvii, 283 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$29.95 cloth.

Reviewer Philip L. Frana is Software History Project Manager and Postdoctoral Fellow at the Charles Babbage Institute for the History of Information Technology on the campus of the University of Minnesota. He is working on a book-length history of medical computing.

We live in an age when even orthodoxy can seem alternative. Over the past half-century, for instance, chiropractors and osteopaths have found new respect through Medicare reimbursement. Many other regimens, such as acupuncture and massage therapy, teeter on the cusp of acceptance. Even xenograft transplantation—the therapeutic use of animal cells, tissues, and organs—once a horrifying apparition of the “mad doctor,” has found limited acceptance in clinical and surgical practice.

Yet the multiple yardsticks we now use in managing and assessing medical care, as well as in interpreting historical evidence, today make us cautious of complaint and judgment—even in the case of outright chicanery. Two fresh books on the subject of quackery, which so often has been identified as a peculiarly midwestern institution, test our presumptions on such matters in new and useful ways: Eric Juhnke’s synthetic *Quacks & Crusaders: The Fabulous Careers of John Brinkley, Norman Baker, and Harry Hoxsey* and R. Alton Lee’s biographical *The Bizarre Careers of John R. Brinkley*. The central questions of both of these books deal with the essential tension between individual free-

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